

INFO	LOG-00	EEB-00	AF-00	AID-00	AIT-00	AMAD-00	AOP-00
	AEX-00	AS-00	A-00	CA-00	CIAE-00	COME-00	CCOE-00
	C-00	DODE-00	DOT-00	ANHR-00	WHA-00	PDI-00	DS-00
	MEDE-00	EAP-00	DHSE-00	EUR-00	FAAE-00	UTED-00	VCI-00
	FSI-00	OBO-00	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	MMP-00
	MOFM-00	MOF-00	M-00	CDC-00	VCIE-00	NEA-00	DCP-00
	NSAE-00	ISN-00	OIC-00	OIG-00	NIMA-00	OPR-00	EPAU-00
	PA-00	PC-01	PER-00	PM-00	GIWI-00	P-00	SCT-00
	ISNE-00	DOHS-00	IRM-00	MR-00	NCTC-00	FMP-00	BBG-00
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TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
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UNCLAS STATE 009107

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [KDEM](#) [OIIP](#) [HA](#)
SUBJECT: GUIDANCE AND TALKING POINTS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN HAITI
-- 28 JANUARY 2010

REF: A) STATE 8507; B) STATE 7937; C) STATE 7504; D) STATE 5277

TO CHIEFS OF MISSION, DCMS, AND PAOS FROM UNDERSECRETARY
JUDITH McHALE

11. Summary: Most international media have now moved on from Haiti to other issues, with remaining coverage focused on the January 27 rescue of a teenage girl and continuing concerns over aid access. Posts should continue to monitor local reporting and engage opinion leaders personally when coverage is inaccurate or mischaracterizes U.S. efforts in Haiti. While you no longer need to send daily updates on media coverage on Haiti, you are expected to continue to report immediately on any developing topics of concern, influential editorial comment, and new Embassy engagement on Haiti. End Summary.

12. This message is designed to provide you with key themes, talking points, and updated facts to help you engage local audiences and correct misinformation or distortions about America's efforts in Haiti. The next update will be sent on January 29.

MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

13. EMBEDS: The U.S. government, through the Joint Information Center in Haiti, is now able to offer limited opportunities for media in Haiti to observe unified humanitarian relief efforts. Please ask media to contact the Joint Information Center in Haiti with any specific requests (HaitiJIC@usaid.gov).

14. PRESS CONFERENCES: On January 27, a new Media Center set up with help from USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives held a press conference with the Government of Haiti. President Preval, Prime Minister Bellerive and Haiti's Minister of Communications participated, alongside U.S. Ambassador Merten, Ambassador Lucke of USAID, Joint Task Force-Haiti Commanding Officer LT GEN Keen, and the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General. The event underscored that the U.S. and other countries are cooperating closely in support of Haitian government requests for relief and reconstruction assistance. Fifty journalists attended, including seven camera crews, with most representing Haitian outlets.

15. On January 28, Haitian Port Authority Director Evan

Charles and Rear Admiral Samuel Perez, Deputy Director, Joint Interagency Task Force-South held a press conference to update media on progress delivering humanitarian aid, food, and medical supplies from ships to the people of Haiti, as well as efforts to restore and expand port operations. In addition, media were invited January 28 to observe distribution of USAID food commodities at the Petionville Country Club in Port-au-Prince, where USAID partner Catholic Relief Services is feeding more than 1,000 families per day with the assistance of community volunteers.

KEY THEMES FROM TODAY'S GUIDANCE

¶6. Key themes for use with the media today, drawn from Joint Information Center Haiti talking points:

-- At the request of the Haitian government, the U.S. continues to coordinate America's relief efforts with the United Nations and the international community.

-- The United States continues to expand and secure our distribution network in Haiti to deliver additional aid more quickly to the Haitian people.

-- We are coordinating closely with the UN relief effort and more than 30 nations and hundreds of NGOs to deliver food, water and medical assistance quickly throughout the country.

-- The Agency for International Development (USAID) has the overall lead for the U.S. disaster response in Haiti.

-- While we continue to focus our combined energies on ensuring U.S. support to life saving and life sustaining priorities, we are also looking ahead by assisting the Haitian government and people as they begin the process of reconstruction and rebuilding.

-- The Government of Haiti, alongside members of the international community, gathered in Montreal, Canada, on 25 January 2010. Participants recognized the continued leadership and sovereignty of the Government of Haiti, and we are consulting closely with all interested parties to mobilize support and begin planning for a donors conference in New York.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN HAITI

¶7. KEY FACTS: From the latest fact sheets on Haiti earthquake recovery (reflecting the best data now available in an ever-changing disaster environment):

-- Bottles of water distributed by U.S. teams in the last 24 hours: more than 65,328; total 1,885,791

-- Humanitarian Daily Rations (HDRs) delivered by U.S. teams in the last 24 hours: over 19,740; total 1,485,309.

-- Medical supplies delivered last 24 hours: 12,553 lbs; total 69,636 lbs

-- Flights: 112 in the last 24 hours (pre-crisis rate was 13).

-- Number of Haitian ports fully operational: nine; three are partially operational, with work underway to repair them; another previously opened port has been closed temporarily for aftershock repair. Both tanker terminals can receive cargo.

-- To date, USAID had contributed nearly \$256 million in humanitarian assistance.

-- In total, the USG has contributed more than \$382 million, including over \$106 million to the UN Flash Appeal.

¶8. SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS: To date, U.S. SAR teams have rescued 47 people, while U.S. and other international teams combined have rescued 134 people. Decisions regarding search and rescue efforts are made by the Government of Haiti in consultation with international SAR teams. In coordination with the GoH and local fire authorities, U.S. SAR teams have donated a significant cache of their equipment to Haitian first responders.

COMMUNICATIONS

¶9. Haitian police and civilian volunteers, assisted by the U.S. military, have distributed more than 43,800 U.S.-funded hand-held radios to survivors of the January 12 earthquake as part of an overall effort to help reach the people of Haiti via FM/AM broadcasting of Haiti public service announcements. The World Health Organization, UN and Government of Haiti are preparing key health messages and translating them for dissemination to the public. The small emergency radios are both solar-powered and hand-cranked, so they do not require batteries. They also are equipped with a small light. The radios allow disaster survivors to receive news and important information concerning international relief efforts and public safety messages.

¶10. "Commando Solo," a radio station in the sky provided by the Pennsylvania Air National Guard, has been helping transmit AM radio signals to Haiti since the quake to deliver information, including live broadcasts of VOA news and Creole call-in shows; this USG effort was covered in a January 26 CNN website feature:
<http://www.cnn.com/2010/TECH/01/26/haiti.flying.radio/index.html>

RESPONDING TO CURRENT AREAS OF CONCERN

¶11. THE U.S. ROLE IN HAITI: While overseas media attention on this issue has waned, a few political figures and media continue to call the support provided to Haiti by the U.S. military an "occupation." The following talking points and statements may be used to respond to inaccurate depictions of the U.S. role:

-- RENI PREVAL, PRESIDENT OF HAITI (press conference in Port-au-Prince, Jan. 27, when asked to respond to critics of the large U.S. role in relief efforts in Haiti): "This is a distraction. You have your ideological problems; resolve it yourself. We are talking about people suffering, and you are talking about politics. All countries facing the same situation would have accepted the help. I do not see the problem of sovereignty which we speak."

-- JOSE MIGUEL INSULZA, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (press conference in Port-au-Prince, Jan. 27): "The U.S. has enough problems in the world. When there is an emergency, everyone tries to help. ... Did the Europeans lose their sovereignty under the Marshall Plan?"

-- KENNETH MERTEN, U.S. AMBASSADOR TO HAITI (interview on Foreign Policy magazine website, Jan. 27): "The fact of the matter is the military is here because they have the immediate capability to bring humanitarian aid to the area. They're close, they have the capability, that's why they are here . . . I would suggest that other countries maybe haven't thought that through."

-- SECRETARY CLINTON (Jan. 26) "Some of the international press either misunderstood or deliberately misconstrued what was a civilian and military response, both of them necessary in order to be able to deliver aid to the Haitians who desperately needed it. . . The government of Haiti must and will be in the lead. We cannot any longer in the 21st century be making decisions for people and their futures without listening, and without giving them the opportunity to be as involved and make as many decisions as possible."

¶12. AIRPORT AND ACCESS ISSUES: Various media continue to snipe at U.S. "control" of the airport. Posts may draw from the following facts to set the record straight and correct false perceptions of decision-making over airport access:

-- On January 26, management of the airfield was transferred from U.S. Air Force Special Operations to an international combined military/civilian air traffic control team.

-- Since starting operations until the transfer date, the air traffic controllers helped bring in 1,465 fixed wing aircraft

and 865 rotary wing aircraft, working from an 18-inch table in the grassy infield of Port-au-Prince airfield, without a single aircraft mishap or incident.

-- GORDON DUGUID, JOINT INFORMATION CENTER HAITI (press briefings, Jan. 27): "Flight priorities are worked out by the Haitian government in consultation with the air traffic controllers. It is very much the case that there are three levels of priority for flights that land at the airport. The first priority goes to the largest planes. They not only carry the most cargo, but they are the most difficult to handle on the ground, and therefore the air traffic controllers want to deal with them first. The second priority goes to perishable goods. So if you have a very small craft carrying a very large cargo of plasma, it gets priority because it has a perishable cargo. The third priority is one of safety. Because of the number of planes coming in and the need to sometimes circle the airport, if the plane is low on fuel, that gets priority, too. . . The problems that we had early on were indeed problems of violation of Haitian sovereignty, where nations in their desire to help were actually sending aircraft into the national airspace without filing a flight plan. No nation on earth would tolerate that. It's a very dangerous thing to do. But it was understandable given the goodwill that everyone wanted to show. Now everyone is filing flight plans and following standard air traffic control processes."

¶13. AID DISTRIBUTION: Isolated disturbances at food distribution points continue to draw media attention to the challenges of aid dispersal in Haiti. You may wish to draw from the following on-the-record comments to place into context the challenges all relief organizations now operating in Haiti face:

-- KENNETH MERTEN, U.S. AMBASSADOR TO HAITI (interview in "The Cable" blog, Foreign Policy magazine, Jan. 27): "The amount of food we have is sufficient; the issue is getting it out to people in a form they can most easily use and eat and getting it to certain distribution points in sufficient numbers . . . People need to understand there's a great deal of frustration among people here. They have to wait longer. Their anger is understandable; it's unfortunate. . . The infrastructure is a huge limitation here and there's a lack of appreciation of what the infrastructure challenges here are and were even before the crisis occurred."

DISINFORMATION

¶14. Disinformation alleging that the Haitian earthquake was deliberately caused by what is inaccurately described as a U.S. secret weapon, the High Frequency Active Auroral Research Program (HAARP), continues to appear in some fringe media, including "Javan" daily in Iran and "thepeoplesvoice.org." But some critics are now trying to distance themselves from the disinformation: The Venezuelan Embassy in the United States sent a complaint to the website of "Foreign Policy" magazine, asserting that President Hugo Chavez had never personally associated himself with the story that an alleged U.S. weapon had caused the earthquake in Haiti (one of the first appearances of the disinformation was on the website of a state-run television station in Venezuela, and attributed directly to Chavez by ABC newspaper in Spain). Posts should rely on guidance in Ref B and C to respond to any appearances of the "secret weapon" earthquake disinformation, and should report any new disinformation to Task Force 3 (TaskForce-3@state.gov).

OTHER RESOURCES

¶15. A new article on U.S. search and rescue efforts in Haiti is available on www.america.gov (<http://www.america.gov/st/develop-english/2010/January/201001280958281ejrehsiF0.3818476.html?CP.rss=true>). Posts are encouraged to seek opportunities to place this article and others from [America.gov](http://www.America.gov) in host country

media. Please report successful placement to your Regional PD office and to IIP.

¶16. MEDIA LIGHTHOUSE: The Navy Visual News website (<http://www.chinfo.navy.mil/visualnews/media-lighthouse.html>) provides useful video clips and photos of U.S. military relief efforts in Haiti. The system provides a centrally managed collection of still photography, video, breaking news features, and topic-specific categories to assist print, broadcast, and web-based outlets requiring 24/7 access to current events throughout the U.S. Navy. Feature databases typically contain broadcast-quality video (including reduced resolutions for preview and web-based venues), high-res still photos, PDF files and Microsoft Word documents (i.e. press releases). A log-on is needed but is easy to set up (email navyvisualnews@navy.mil for an account). You are encouraged to establish your own log-in to obtain imagery for post publications. You may also share this information with local media; there are no republication restrictions on imagery used.

¶17. ADDITIONAL SITES TO BOOKMARK: More information on U.S. efforts in Haiti can be found at the following websites:

- USAID (www.usaid.gov);
- White House (www.whitehouse.gov/haitiearthquake_embed);
- DHS (www.dhs.gov/index.shtm);
- Health and Human Services (<http://www.hhs.gov/haiti/>); and
- SOUTHCOM (www.southcom.mil/AppsSC/factFiles.php?id=138)

¶18. The Haiti Earthquake Assistance website on INFOCENTRAL (<https://infocentral.state.gov/haiti-earthquake-assistance>) is your best source for comprehensive and up-to-date talking points, links to major speeches (including translations into French, Spanish, Portuguese, and/or Creole, as available), cables, talking points, media summaries, social media resources (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), and outreach tools (photos and videos from DOD, America.gov articles). The site includes a matrix listing international assistance contributions, known media presence in Haiti, media reaction and comments by officials, and other issues.

¶19. The PD task force can be contacted at (202) 647-6613, via unclassified email at 'TaskForce-3@State.gov' or classified email at 'TaskForce-3@State.sgov.gov.' Media and guidance inquiries should be directed to the State PA Press Office at (202) 647-2492 or after hours via the Operations Center at (202) 647-1512.

¶20. Minimize considered.

CLINTON